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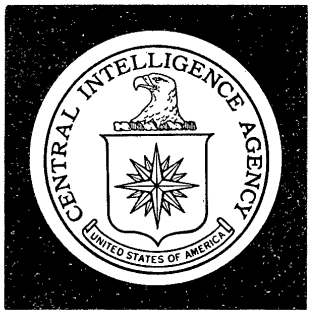

The President's Daily Brief

7 January 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

7 January 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow seems to be lifting its restraints in the polemical battle with Peking as the second round of border talks gets under way. *(Page 1)*

In the Middle East, clashes on the cease-fire lines continue at a high level. *(Page 2)*

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France and Libya

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(Page 3)

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USSR - COMMUNIST CHINA

As the second round of border talks gets under way, the Soviet press has begun criticizing China more openly and directly than it has since the Peking talks began in October. In addition, our Embassy in Moscow reports that some of the more vicious anti-Mao propaganda tracts, which had disappeared after the Kosygin-Chou En-lai meeting in September, are reappearing in Moscow bookstores.

The renewal of Soviet criticism follows especially harsh Chinese polemical attacks. Moscow may hope that Peking interprets the shift as a sign that its patience is wearing thin, and will accordingly adopt a more forthcoming attitude.

The resumption of polemics, even with a less strident tone than before the talks began, could also be intended to help prepare the Soviet domestic audience in case the negotiations do not reach an acceptable conclusion. [redacted] *Soviet diplomats* [redacted] *have been taken aback by the virulence of recent Chinese polemics. They appear less sanguine than before about prospects for early progress in the talks.*

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ISRAEL - ARAB STATES

Israel is lashing out harder at Jordan and Lebanon in response to the increase in incidents along its borders with the two. The principal issue with Jordan is the continued harassment of Israeli settlements in northern Israel. The Israelis suspect King Husayn's strictures against Jordanian Army support of the fedayeen are not being obeyed. In consequence, Israel recently has shelled the large city of Irbid, knocked out Jordan's only operating radar station, and, as reported yesterday, has again blown out a section of the East Ghor Canal.

Israeli aircraft yesterday struck again at fedayeen bases in Lebanon. Beirut meanwhile is trying to work out with Fatah the return of the Israeli watchman captured by the fedayeen on 1 January. Fatah, however, wants Israel to deal directly with it, and has suggested a swap of the watchman for an Arab guerrilla held by the Israelis since 1967. Israel has released four Lebanese prisoners captured during the recent commando raid, but is holding on to 17 others.

> *Although there are no indications that Israel intends to "gain more security," by seizing more Arab territory, the patience of some Israeli leaders, particularly in the military, may be wearing thin. Some of them have from time to time hinted that such a solution might eventually be necessary not only against Jordan, but also Lebanon. Defense Minister Dayan last week caused considerable consternation by implying publicly that Israel might have to take more territory east of the Jordan River.*

The Suez Canal front is also active. The Egyptians, after losing two or three MIG-21s Sunday, yesterday sent jets against Israeli positions along the canal for the first time since November. Egyptian commandos also carried out an apparently unsuccessful commando raid yesterday, losing nine killed, according to Israeli claims.

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FRANCE-LIBYA

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